

THE AP STLE

*People get ready, there's a train comin'.
You don't need no baggage, you just get on board.
All you need is faith to hear the diesels hummin'.
You don't need no ticket, you just thank the Lord.—Curtis Mayfield*

As I grew up in the church, the notion of impending doom that might compel a person to faith was never communicated. Quite the contrary, there was (and is) conveyed an overwhelming sense of gratitude as well as an adoration and love of God. It is hard to understand why someone would be drawn to the first kind of fear-based faith rather than the second. Isn't hope and love more attractive?

The readings in the upcoming season will touch upon the fear of God. We will hear stories of the end of times, of predictions of what will happen when Jesus returns. At the same time, we will be preparing for the intimate event in which God shares his greatest gift with us in the Nativity of our Lord. In that story, doom and gloom abounds; still, a true and pure light enters the world in Jesus and begins our amazing transformation.

When St. Thomas church was founded in 1962, the world was experiencing great upheaval. Not long after its first season of worship, President Kennedy was assassinated; the country was near civil war over the rights of citizens; the Vietnam war was quickly escalating, and the draft was in full force. Several prominent theologians declared that "God was dead." People writing during that decade had plenty of doom and gloom predictions about the end of the United States, faith, the church, and much more.

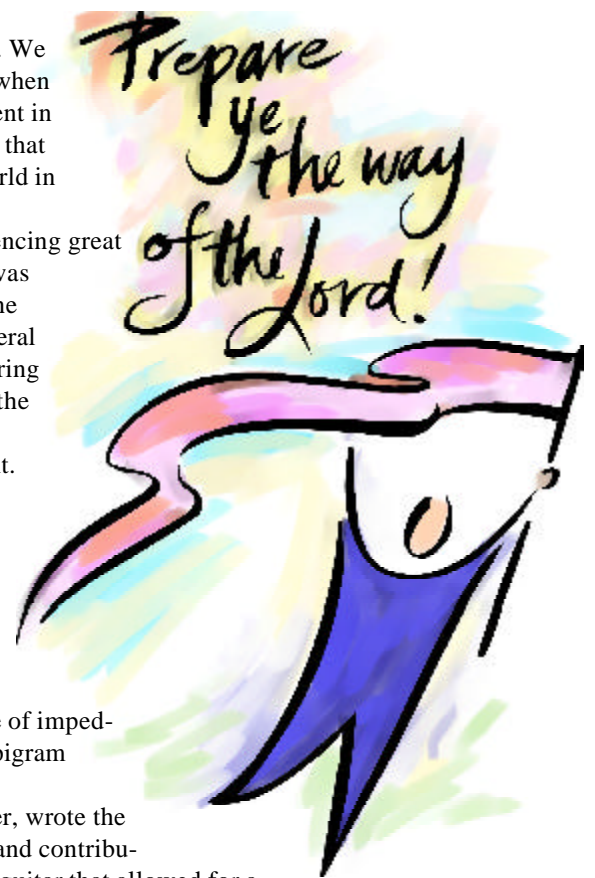
The early '60s was also a time of great invention and accomplishment. There was great hope and optimism for the future. The first presidential debate was televised; our country sent its first manned spaceship around the Earth; and, at the end of the decade, the Apollo 11 spaceship landed on the moon. Moreover, civil rights legislation passed, and the nation's first African-American member of congress was elected.

Now some five decades later, St. Thomas is an active, thriving church while the culture that surrounds us still looks the same, doesn't it? Though events, places, and names have changed, there is still a sense of impending doom mixed with optimistic hope in the greater culture. A famous epigram states: "The more things change, the more things stay the same."

In the late 1960s, Curtis Mayfield, renowned blues and funk composer, wrote the lyrics to "People Get Ready." Curtis was renowned for his unique style and contributions to popular music. He was best known for his unusual tuning of his guitar that allowed for a very "blue-sy" feel. This popular song has recently become a regular part of worship music in many churches. It is a song that hits the themes of recalling our impending death and, at the same time, points to the resurrection and the hope of the lost in Jesus.

Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany move us through fear and into hope. We are asked to get ready, to climb on board, and to ride the train of light and hope into the darkening world. This choice is always before us. As a people of faith, we are called to be the light of the world. The question is, can we be that beacon of hope?

—Blessings, Father Gar



Footnotes

Beth L. Elswick, Director of Music Ministries



People, Get Ready!

Getting ready for Christmas is a big deal. Over the years, we have learned that in our family lives, church programs, finances and budget, calendars and scheduling, we must plan ahead. Yet, as hectic as the season has become, preparing for Christmas has always been great fun.

One of my favorite aspects of the Advent season is the wonderful coupling of the readings foretelling Christ's birth with the prophecy of Christ's Second Coming. We sing "*O come, O come Emmanuel*" and pair it with "*Lo, he comes in clouds descending*" or "*Days of Elijah*." What great music, and the poetic imagery is delightful.

Think about it. With the implications of our modern holiday culture, I am combining the season of Santa Claus/Christmas vacation with the ultimate end of time, distilling the very meaning of life—an incredible juxtaposition. Move over, Monty Python. Yet, this is still not quite as bizarre as the time the leftover Halloween display of Freddy Krueger was placed near the Nativity display on a shelf at Walmart.

In my own mind, as much as I may quote the earlier texts of Handel or Buxtehude when I sing "*Come Jesus, come. Come quickly, come.*" I really am in no hurry to leave this earth (even when I hear how bad everything is on the evening news). I am having great fun and feel incredibly blessed. Yet, I understand that in earlier generations, the urgent prayer for the Second Coming was genuine and heartfelt. In fact, the pairing of the texts of Christ's first coming with those of his Second Coming dates back to the Middle Ages. Had I lived during the Plague, the 30 Years' War, the Inquisition, the Dust Bowl, or the Great Depression, I, no doubt, would have sung the texts longing for the Second Coming with a greater understanding and intensity.

When the year 2000 arrived, I was somewhat amused by those who said, "Beware, the end is near." My own grandfather had thought that the Second Coming might somehow coincide with the onset of the next millennium. Maybe it will, if one considers that 1000 years is but a day in the sight of God. In my mind, I recall the hymn, "*Wake, awake the night is flying.*" I am convinced that no one will know the hour, and I understand that we must always be ready.

SOOOOO Let's get ready. The children are preparing for the annual Christmas pageant. The choirs and other musical ensembles are spending extra hours of rehearsals preparing seasonal favorites and new settings of music, as well. How are you planning to help with the Advent programs at St. Thomas? Let's get busy. This will be great fun!

Town meeting planned for December 1

Now that the master planning for St. Thomas' future is underway, our design team, led by the architecture firm of **Gould Evans**, is requesting an opportunity to talk with the broader community about the planning process, what they are finding, and what the alternatives might be as we look forward toward expanded facilities.

The design team is working with the building committee and will have meetings with ministry representatives. The team would appreciate the opportunity to hear insights and feedback from other members of the congregation as we proceed with the planning process.

We will do this with a TOWN HALL MEETING to be held on December 1, 2010 at 7:00 pm.

More about this meeting will be coming your way in the weeks leading up to the event.

PLEASE MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND and convey what you think is important.

—Gary Summers, on behalf of the
Long-Range Planning Committee



ADVENT

How can you prepare for the Birth of our Lord?

All Parish Advent Program

We want you and we need you!

Advent is a season when we prepare ourselves for the coming of Jesus. What better way to learn about the story than for all ages to experience it. Our Children and Youth Commission met over the summer to discuss what we would like our Advent program to look like this year; after discussing a number of ideas, we decided that it would be great to have an **intergenerational** Christmas pageant. Everyone would have a hand in helping put it together.

While our younger children study their roles as characters from the story, we will have numerous opportunities to involve everyone in its production. There will be some kind of job for everyone. Don't worry if you won't be here for the actual pageant. We will have some task for you to do at our Advent Sunday night gatherings.

Beginning on December 5th at 5:30 pm, our Advent program will begin with dinner. Then the entire group will work together on the Pageant. Following this activity session, three separate formation time segments will occur—one for adults, one for youth, and one for children. Put your gifts into action this season and plan to join us!

The DETAILS in a nutshell:

Advent program: This occurs on December 5th, 12th, and 19th.

Dinner: A "soup and salad" potluck will begin at 5:30 pm.

Sign up on the sheet on hallway bulletin board.

Pageant activity: Takes place from 6–6:45 pm.

Formation program: Will meet from 6:45–7:30pm.

All Parish Caroling!

We had such a festive time last year coming together and loading the wagons to go caroling through our neighborhood. Bundle up and join us again this year for another wonderful night when we sing joyfully to our neighbors. Hot cocoa and apple cider will be waiting for us at church to warm you up.

This evening will kick off our **November 28th** Sunday Advent program. Come early for a potluck dinner, and a brief rehearsal of carols. Then a horse-drawn wagon will take us through our neighboring streets as we sing carols and bring Christmas cheer to our neighbors.

The DETAILS in another nutshell:

November 28, 2010

Dinner begins at 5:30 pm.

At 6:15 pm, we will pile into the wagons.

At 7:15pm, we'll arrive back at church and enjoy some hot cocoa and apple cider.



Youth Advent Program

Youth group meetings will coincide with the Sunday night Advent program. That is, instead of meeting at our regular time of 7–8:30, we will meet earlier from 5:30–7:30 pm. As part of our meeting, we will be helping with the production of the annual Christmas pageant by using the gifts and talents of each of our youth group members.

New this year will be a youth ensemble of instruments and voices which will accompany the younger kids in the pageant. During our formation time, we will play games and discuss the struggles which Joseph and Mary encountered on their journey to Bethlehem.

Get ready to volunteer for the IHN Holiday party

The sixth annual **Johnson County Interfaith Hospitality Network Holiday Party** will be held on Saturday, December 11, 2010, from 11:00 am–1:00 pm at St. Thomas. We expect about 20+ families (totaling approximately 70 guests) to attend.

Like last year, each guest will receive one special gift. In addition, each family will receive gift cards and a holiday food basket. The party will include a kid's store for the children to shop (at no cost to them) for parents, grandparents, teachers, and/or siblings. The kids will also have the chance to play games and activities. All guests are treated to a delicious lunch and have time to visit and reconnect with other guests and volunteers.

Of course, no Christmas party is complete until Santa and Mrs. Claus make an appearance.

The IHN Holiday Party committee is thrilled to announce that along with hosting the party, St. Thomas is adopting a family of eleven this year!

People of St. Thomas: This is your opportunity to help celebrate the joy of Christ! Here's how:

- *by purchasing gift cards or a gift for a specific guest,
- *by providing small gifts (\$5) for the children's Christmas store,
- *by supplying food for the guests & volunteers,
- *and by VOLUNTEERING and experiencing the joy of Christmas!

Deadline for the gifts/food is Sunday, December 5th.

Questions: Contact **IHN Holiday Party** co-chairs **Jean Adam** (402-4392) or **Dola McNown** (541-9226).

IHN does make a difference

The **JoCo Interfaith Hospitality Network** is at capacity with four families, and fifteen individuals.

Through the Network of 33 congregations, St. Thomas continues to make a difference in the lives of homeless families here in Johnson County.

IHN Stats Since June 2004

Families Served (consisting of):

Single females: **19**

Families with children: **78**

Total # of guest families: **97**

Individuals Served:

Adults: **118**

Children: **182**

Total number of individuals: **300**

Total bed nights provided: **20,966**

Total Meals provided: **62,898**

Reflections upon Stewardship

—Rick Bush—

[ed.note: This talk was given to the congregation on Consecration Weekend, November 6/7, 2010.]

St. Thomas is an amazing place. We live as a family of faith and demonstrate this by loving and caring for one another as Jesus called us to do. Last year we buried many long time parishioners. The love and support our community gave the families was amazing.

There are other ways that the people of St. Thomas demonstrate their love and live out their baptismal vows:

- At the neighborhood pantry at St. Paul's (KCK) today (October 30, 2010) alone, we had more than 40 St. Thomas volunteers; last year, the Pantry passed out more than 270,300 pounds of food and served 404 families (about 700 people). Each month, we average more than 78 new households who sign up for our service.

- The Saturday morning breakfast serves about 220 per week.
- As of this morning, our IHN Family has "lifted up" and supported 300 individuals. (Please refer to the article on this page in the upper left column.) What a beautiful gift we ALL have in our IHN Family!

- We are helping support a school in Haiti.
- We give money to the Episcopal Community Services.
- We have supported the Habitat House in Coffeyville, KS.

The above ministries we support not only with our volunteering, but also with a portion of our pledge to St. Thomas which is sent to these ministries to help keep them alive.

I could talk more about our ministries that serve like our youth ministry, amazing choirs, and serving home communion. The BackSnack program serves 70 children per week at Commanche Elementary School in Overland Park.

Stewardship corner

To all the dedicated parishioners of the St. Thomas church family:

Thank you once again for your generosity, and devotion to do God's work.

Consecration Weekend was a huge success! Everyone enjoyed delicious catered meals and fellowship. Thank you for participating.

—The Stewardship Team

The Stewardship Committee is:
co-chairs **Rick Bush** and **Gerry Miller**,

Ann Clements,

Jack Dutra,

Judy Dutra,

Lee Rowland,

Holly Farkes,

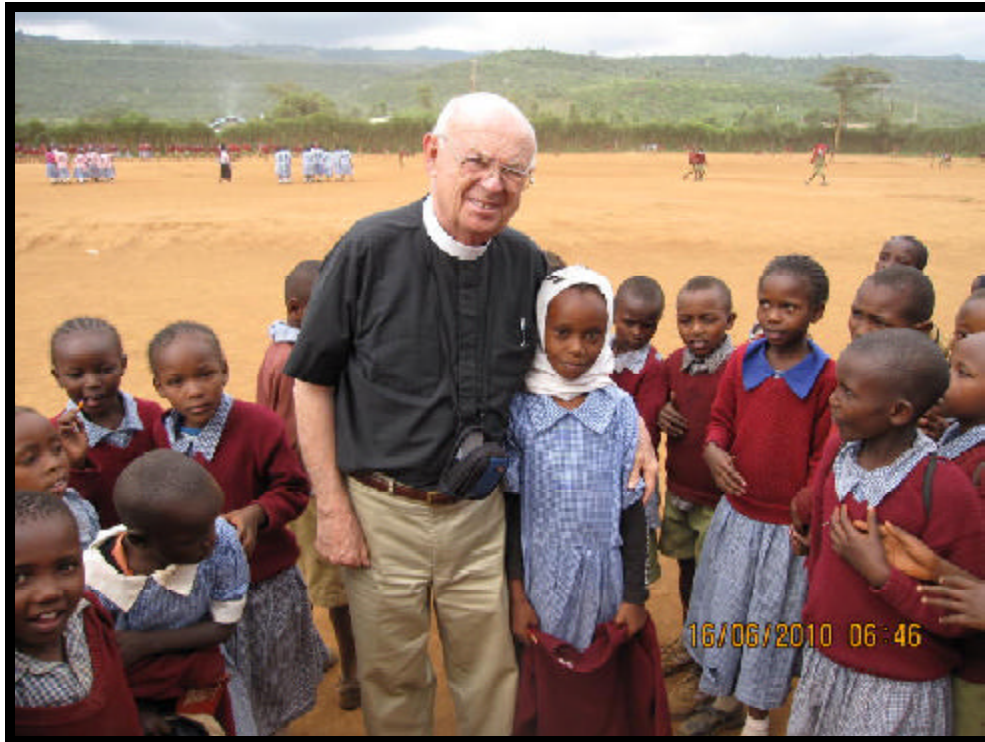
Rick Ulrich,

Tracy Hume,

Kim Palmer.

Kenya changed my life

—Father Bob Terrill—



When I was first asked to join the Diocesan community development team to Kenya last summer, I thought, “Wow, what a wonderful thing to do. I’ve always wanted to go to Africa.”

When I got there and started ministering to the people in the small village of Maai Mahiu, my original idea of a great trip turned into a powerfully renewing experience in Jesus Christ, powered by the Holy Spirit, through the lives of the wonderful people of Kenya.

Sure, we did many things. We provided new latrines and school desks for a public school. We provided youth leadership training and gave 40 soccer balls to the kids. We provided training in human rights for women, and we taught nutrition to women with HIV/AIDS.

We provided funding for a drip irrigation system for the church, and we supported their nascent microfinance program. We evaluated an orphanage, inspected a camp for internally displaced persons, taught bible classes, and conducted healing services.

We developed a linkage with the Anglican Diocese of Nakuru. This ministry of the Diocese made a powerful impact in such a short time, and for this, we thank Almighty God.

Joe Bob and Nyakio Lake, fellow parishioners at St. Thomas, joined me in the community development team. The rest of the team came from throughout the Diocese of Kansas and one from North Carolina.

However, the best part of the whole trip was building relationships with the people.

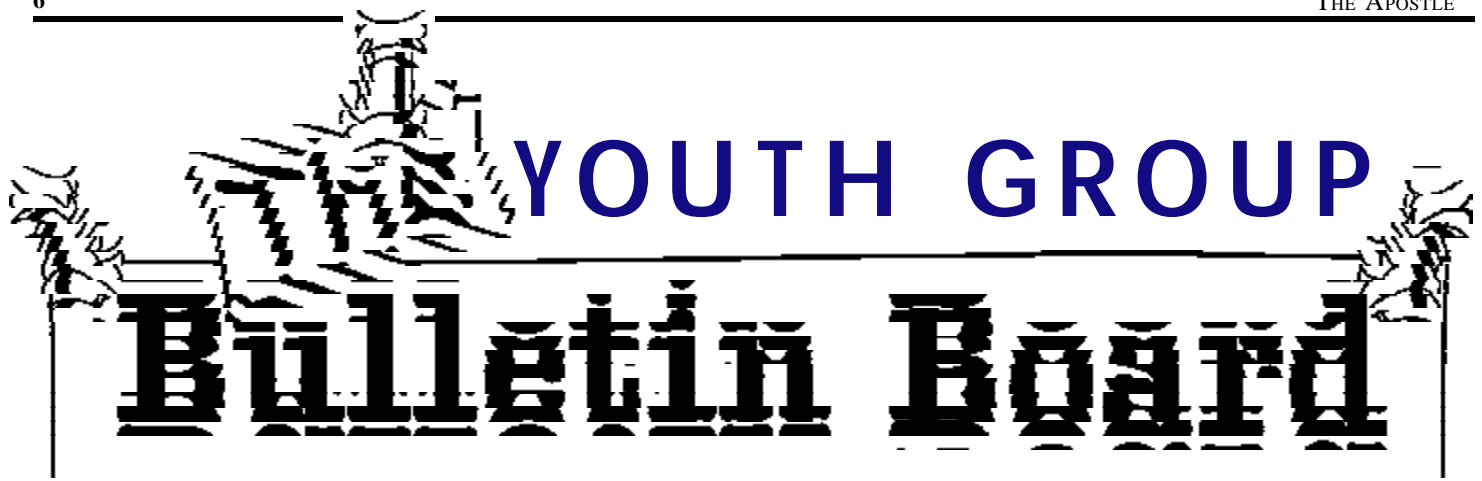
Father Antony Ngugi, pastor of All Saints Anglican Church, demonstrated the dedication and commitment beyond anything I have ever seen.

Without a salary for six months, Father Antony walked miles in the rift valley sun to visit his people. He prayed with them, loved them, and cared for them. You see, he does not have a car and has to walk everywhere. He and his wife Eunice have a new baby boy, but they lost a child two years ago because they had no immediate medical help available.

The people are poor beyond imagination. Subsisting on a meager diet of maize and beans, living in 30 square meter homes with dirt floors, two small rooms and a wood burning fire, they are a joyful and grateful people. They give thanks to God for the very small things they have and their hearts are full of joy.

This is what moved me to tears. Coming from a Western culture, I could not imagine a people that had nothing, yet gave thanks for that nothing and the little that they did have.

These are a hopeful, expectant, triumphant people, living out their lives with the hope that God will help them in their time of need.



YOUTH GROUP

Bulletin Board

Advent/Christmas activities just for our youth

Plaza Lights Trip



On December 12th we will attend dinner and have pageant time at church. Then we will travel to the Plaza to have our Christmas lights Scavenger Hunt.

Our evening will conclude with a cup of warm coffee, hot chocolate, tea, or apple cider at Scooters before heading back and being home by 9 pm.

We enjoyed this activity so much last year and are looking forward to a great time this year.

FYI

We will break for the Holidays and not have Sunday school or Youth group on December 26th or January 2nd.

We reconvene according to our regular schedule: 9:45 Sunday school and 7-8:30 pm youth group on January 9, 2011.

Advent Program

Youth group meetings will coincide with the Sunday night Advent program. That is, instead of meeting at our regular time (7-8:30 pm), we will meet from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. As part of our meeting, we will be helping with the production of our annual Christmas pageant by using the gifts and talents of each of our youth group members.



New this year will be a youth ensemble of instruments and voices which will accompany the younger kids in the pageant. During our formation time, we will play games and discuss the struggles which Joseph and Mary encountered on their way to Bethlehem.



Confirmation

We are very excited this year to have a confirmation class with fourteen youth involved and look forward to seeing them receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on December 5th. The following students have given much effort and contemplation to their studies as they prepared to express their mature commitment to Christ. Please pray for each of them. Congratulations to: **Spencer Adam, Clare Bullock, Stratton Georgoulis, Chris Gerhardt-Mathews, Emma Hardeman, Lynda Johnson, Justin Kline, Matt Pratt, Paige Salts, Carson Ferren, Jackson Fuller, Logan Kane, Evan Kline, and Anthony Plescia.**

Outreach at Lock-In

This past October, the youth had an overnight at the church. Our evening was spent planning for our spooktacular **Boo Bash**, eating a lot of junk food (as well as healthy food,) and playing games all throughout the church. Our youth really enjoyed the opportunity to explore and learn about their church. In the Worship space, they laughed, talked and joked around; it was good to see them feel so comfortable in their church.

Bright and early the next morning, we traveled to St. Paul's (KCK) to serve breakfast to many hungry people. They received compliments from regular breakfast volunteers about them being attentive, polite, and very giving of themselves. As Director of Youth ministries, I was extremely proud of the level of maturity they exhibited doing an important outreach service.

More youth group news!

Miqra (meek-rah)— a Diocesan Youth event

Don't be turned off by the funny name or think that all we do is sit in a room reading the Bible outloud to each other.

Miqra is a fun youth event packed with games, activities, singing, and much more.

This is an event that takes place in Topeka at the Cathedral as well as at St. David's.

It is for youth who are in grades 6th-12th. The middle school students will start at the Cathedral and be bussed over to St. David's for the weekend to enjoy games, activities and workshops geared towards their age group.

The high school students will stay at the beautiful Cathedral and learn about the Bible as well as play awesome games. There is the a Bible reading marathon happening all weekend; for this event, youth will sign up for time slots to read the Bible.

In addition, there will be workshops on the Bible as well as many other topics.

Miqra is a fun-filled event that makes the Bible seem awesome and relevant to your life.

Registration is available on the St. Thomas Youth board or from the diocesan youth website: <http://www.episcopal-ks.org/youth/index.html>.

Camp Information/ Summer Events Meeting

On January 30th at either 9:45 am or at 7 pm in the Lower Level Youth Room, summer events and camp information will be presented for youths in grades 3rd through 12th.

Mark your calendars now and plan to join us and learn what awesom events will b available to your children this summer.



Holiday activities abound in Sunday School

Ann Clements, Director of Childrens' Ministries

I love this time of year! Sweater weather is the best. The time change gives us an extra hour to sleep. Excitement builds as we get ready for Thanksgiving and Advent, the beginning of a new church year when we anticipate the Mystery of Christ. At this special time, we move towards Bethlehem and the arrival of the Christ Child with much joy and glory. At St. Thomas, we have a number of activities that will help us in our preparation and celebration this liturgical season.

November 28th during Thanksgiving weekend—Our traditional Family **ADVENTure** will be held during the 9:45 education time in the assembly room. We'll make advent wreaths for our homes and enjoy some refreshments and have fun. For the wreaths, we use fresh evergreen, shrub, holly, etc. trimmings and will gladly accept any donations. The cost is \$5.00 per family. Please sign-up on the hallway bulletin board to give us a count of how many supplies we'll need.

November 28th Advent Sunday Evenings begins—Join us as we start the new church year with supper and caroling through the St. Thomas neighborhood on horse-drawn wagons. Holiday cheer and hot cocoa will be plentiful! At our three remaining Sundays in Advent—December 5th, 12th and 19th—the kids' program will focus on preparing for the Christmas pageant. We'll be getting assistance from our youth and adults. We'll also be making some crafts, singing some songs, maybe even baking some cookies. *Laura Wiltanger* is directing the pageant and *Dr. Beth Elswick* will be in charge of music.

December 24th—The Christmas pageant will be performed at the 4:00 Christmas Eve service. All are invited to join us for this beloved St. Thomas tradition. Director *Laura Wiltanger* will be sending information to parents regarding try-outs, practices, and dress rehearsal. Please call her at 302-1424 for more information.

We will not have church school on **December 26th** or **January 2nd**; our normal class schedule will resume on **January 9th**.

**Wishing everyone a very blessed Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas.
Happy New Year!**

Looking ahead:

Our **Winter Party** had a year off, but we are bringing it back in 2011 as Epiphany comes to a close and Lent begins. This celebration is put on by church school teachers specifically for our Sunday School children. It is simply a time to celebrate 'us'—fun and games are the main attraction. Save this date — **Sunday, March 6th for our Winter Party** —more details will be available after the holidays.





Small Group Ministry welcomes two new groups

Katie Knoll Lenon, Director of Small Group ministries

We have a few new small groups forming that we would like to share with you, in case you are interested in joining.

Do you have a teenager or have a recent high school grad in your family? Then you might like to join a small group recently begun by **Donna Kopp**. This group is currently meeting on Wednesday nights at St. Thomas and would love for you to join. Interested? Please contact **Donna Kopp** at 856-5798.

Do you love to cook? Then give **Jenne Weil** a call! She would love to start a group for people whose passion is for cooking. Her plan is to meet on Tuesdays or Thursday nights every two weeks to share food, swap recipes, and maybe even start developing a new St. Thomas cookbook. If you or your family is tired of the same old thing that you are making for dinner, or if you would like to take your passion for cooking and apply a little more prayerful thought to it, please consider joining this group. There is no one too old or too young to be a part of this group. Contact **Jenne** at home at 492-4835 or reach her by calling her cell phone: 488-4172.

Small Groups are a way of connecting with others at church on a deeper level. It is a way to get more involved in the ministry of the church. Small Groups also provide you and your family with the extra support you need when you experience an overwhelming event in your life. This small group family will be with you to celebrate those miracles and blessings that you experience as well. As **Jack Dutra** would tell you, "It's like having a second family."

See a need for a group we don't have? Please share your idea for a group with **Katie Knoll Lenon**, and we will try and make it happen. Call her at 396-2922, at 451-0512, or reach her at kklenon@stthomasop.org.

Boo Bash was spooktacular!

When the Youth Group brought up the idea of putting together a Haunted House fundraiser to our *Children and Youth Commission* last summer, we did not know what the result was going to be. As October drew near, we began to brainstorm on what experience we wanted to provide the people of St. Thomas. After tossing around several good ideas, we finally landed on a "Scooby-Doo" theme and began to lay the foundation for a great evening.

The youth came to church four nights in a row and spent three hours each evening working on all the preparations. Constructing a Haunted House was only part of our Halloween event. There was so much camaraderie as the kids worked together. Smiles and laughter was music to my ears as they worked on the production for this silly night of fun. We enjoyed seeing everyone enjoying the games, chili, and our well-constructed Haunted House.

We want to extend our thanks to all of you who provided materials, chili and food, volunteer service, and other goodies. With your help and participation, the youth were able to raise over \$800 for this event. Our youth worked hard to give you a fun night. We feel it was a great success.

Thank you for enjoying the evening with us. We had fun!

—Katie Knoll Lenon

Attenshun! **Jason Perez** and **Kael Farkes** saluted our youth for the great job they did on the Boo Bash. *Photo/Father Gar*

Continued from page 4

I have been a member here for 20 years; it has been my second home. My life has changed since becoming a member. I have learned about stewardship by sharing my time, talent, and treasures through volunteering. And I have learned to have the attitude of gratitude as I have been supported by my church family, rectors, and friends. At times when there were people in my life who were ill and when my father died, I was overwhelmed by the love and support that came from the St. Thomas family.

St. Thomas, too, has changed also from the small struggling congregation I knew 20 years ago, to a thriving, loving and growing church. We have so much going on that our building is bursting at its seams.

We are leaders in the diocese because of our generosity and our support to the world and community around us. I am proud to be a member. I hope you are, too.

I could fill page after page with reasons your generosity to St. Thomas will make a difference in others, but I believe that if you think about it, you have your own reasons.

I invite you to pray this week about your gift, and come join us for Consecration Weekend for a celebration of our gifts. Together we will move faithfully toward the vision God has given us.



Behind the scenes with the Altar Guild

Susan Miller, Sacristan



Recently, the Altar Guild held a baby shower for **Leslie, Rob, and Aron Robert Baggenstoss** at the home of **Susan Miller**, Sacristan.

After feasting on a salad luncheon, everyone enjoyed watching Leslie opening gifts for Baby Boy Baggenstoss!

From left clockwise, Shirley Maize, Leila Potts, Leslie Baggenstoss, Barbara Wilken and Meg Cross.

Photos/Susan Miller

The beautiful new vestments and hangings for the season of Pentecost are a gift to St. Thomas from **Marie Glover**.

They have been "*Given in Loving Memory of John E. Glover to the Glory of God by Marie Glover.*"



Parish Notes

Births

Congratulations to **Sharon Moorhead** on the October 14, 2010 birth of her great-granddaughter, **Arianna Neveah-Alice McCoy**.

Baptisms

On the 24th of October, St. Thomas welcomed into the household of the Lord, **Avery Lee Rodriguez**, daughter of **Joseph and Isabelle Rodriguez**, and

Langston Heffner, son of **Matthew and Olivia Heffner**.

Both children are the grandchildren of our parishioners, **Phil and Sue Cantrill**.

Deaths

The sympathy of the St. Thomas congregation is extended to:

Ally Bush Flemming, on the death of her mother.

Women give 1st Annual "Heart & Home" Women's Retreat two thumbs "way up!"

On October 14/15, 2010, twenty-four women from St. Thomas launched a wonderful new ministry called the "Heart & Home Retreat For Women." The retreat was led by **The Reverend Kelly Demo** and considered by all to be a great success. Plans are under way for next year's retreat to be held on the weekend of September 30/October 1, 2011, at the Heartland Conference Center.

Here are a few of the comments from the evaluations we received:

"It is so peaceful, quiet environment. I was able to meet, talk, and be with women in whom I could see Christ!"

"The women's retreat revived me spiritually, reinforced my knowledge in the basic good in all people, and gave me a greater understanding of what it means to be Episcopalian."

"I met some amazing women and got to hear their stories, laughter, and tears. I liked the reflection times, especially outside."

This was truly a multi-generational event! Ladies, plant a seed in your heart now to attend the 2011 Retreat!

—Judy Dutra



Heather Geary receives the Eucharist from Retreat leader, The Reverend Kelly Demo. Photo/Judy Dutra



Holy Communion Services

Saturdays

5:30 Holy Communion

Sundays

- 8:45 Holy Communion
with Praise music & Band
- 9:45 Sunday School and
Adult Forum
- 10:45 Holy Communion
with traditional music



THE APOSTLE
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 Overland Park, KS 66213
 • phone: 913-451-0512 •
 • fax: 913-451-1966 •

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Return Service Requested

The next deadline for
The Apostle
 is **January 30, 2011**



Thanksgiving Service

November 24th at 7pm
Pumpkin Dessert Bar follows.
 Bring a "sampler" — 6 to 8 small
 servings of a pumpkin dessert.
 Coffee and cider furnished.

FYI

The nursery will be available for
 the **Thanksgiving Eve** service and
 for the **Sunday night Advent**
Programs on
 Decembe 5th, 12th & 19th.
 The nursery will not be available
 for any of the Christmas Eve
 services, so the attendants can spend
 the holiday with their families.

CALENDAR

November

- 24: **Thanksgiving service**—see info in left column.
- 25: **THANKSGIVING DAY. Office Closed.**
- 26: **Office Closed.**
- 28: **First Sunday of Advent**
9:45 am: Family ADVENTure (wreath-making)
5:30—ALL-PARISH Caroling through the neighborhood.

December

- 1: **Town Hall meeting** about Long-Range plans—7 pm in nave
- 4: **BAKE SALE fundraiser from 9 to 4**
- 5: **Confirmation at 10:45 am service**
5:30—Advent dinner/program
- 11: **IHN party at church begins at 10 am for volunteers.**
- 12: **5:30—Advent dinner/program**
- 19: **ADVENT Lessons and Carols at 10:45 am service**
5:30—Advent dinner/program
- 24: **CHRISTMAS EVE**
4 pm: Children's Pageant
7 pm: Holy Communion
10 pm: Holy Communion00
- 25: **CHRISTMAS DAY—Office closed.**
- 31: **Blessing of Vows. Time:TBA**

Late Breaking News!

Consecration Weekend a rousing success!

The Stewardship team has a special announcement about our totals from this weekend's **Consecration Sunday Celebration**. We had over 350 people in attendance at our two services and had a great time with dinner and lunch. Thanks to all who planned the weekend. If you were not able to attend, Estimate of Giving cards have already been mailed to you. If you have questions, feel free to call the church office.

A total of **124** giving units (households) completed Estimate of Giving Cards for 2011 and **96** increased their financial commitment above last year's amount at services this weekend. The amount committed this weekend was \$427,032.

Based on giving records, we can expect to receive \$167,506 during the coming year from people who have consistent giving patterns during the past twenty-four months, but were not present this weekend. Based on average loose offering of the last three years, we expect to receive \$46,418 from that source. Church income from other sources such as building use, interest, fees, and unexpected giving will be \$17,500 (based on 5-year averages).

All of the above amounts gives us a grand total of \$658,456 anticipated income for 2011.

The total income for our General Operating Budget during the last twelve months was \$566,532. Next year we can expect our operating budget income to increase by \$91,924.

This is a 16% percentage increase in total giving above last year.

Please keep your finance team and vestry in your prayers as they begin the budget process for next year. Thanks for your continued commitment to God's ministry through St. Thomas. Letters will be mailed to verify Estimates of Giving as they are received. Remember that your giving can be changed at any time.

Christmas Wish List

—Donna Fye—

A Christmas Wish List does not have to be overwhelming when you don't know what to get that person who has everything. How many of us have asked someone, "What do you want for Christmas?" or "What can I get you?" And how many of us have gotten this response, "I don't need anything," or "Don't get me anything. I already have everything I need?"

I know I am guilty of saying some of these exact questions and answers myself. I also know that there are some people who do not have everything and do have a wish list.

What if there was an answer to both the question and the answer, and it is right here in Kansas City? Here there are many non-profit organizations that St. Thomas and the Dioceses of Eastern Kansas and Western Missouri support to which a monetary gift can be given in honor of a recipient and/or family. I experienced what I am talking about just last year.

Last winter during one of our many snow storms, a neighbor got stuck in the snow while driving and could not make it back up our cul-de-sac and into her driveway. Don, Doug and I bundled up,

went out and helped her. While we pushed her car, slid, and fell in the snow at times, she was able to steer herself back into her driveway.

Once there she offered us some money, which we declined. After a short conversation, I suggested she make a donation to Harvesters instead.

We walked home feeling better knowing we had helped a neighbor and *Harvesters* was going to get the reward. A few weeks later, we received a thank you note from Harvesters for her kind donation as well as a cute note thanking us for helping our neighbor.

Organizations that St. Thomas is working with or is involved with are: *Episcopal Community Services* (ECS) helps to feed the needy and shut-ins; *Harvesters* is a food bank for local pantries; *Interfaith Hospitality Network* (IHN) serves homeless families in Johnson County; and *St. Paul's Food Pantry* in KCK helps needy people fill their pantries.

Other well-known organizations with offices right here in Kansas City are: *The Susan G. Komen for Breast Cancer*, *Ronald McDonald House*, *Muscular Dystrophy Association*, *Make-A-Wish*

Foundation, *American Red Cross*, *Disabled American Veterans*, *Alzheimer's Association*, *Habitat for Humanity*, *Salvation Army*, *American Kidney Fund*, and *The Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts of America*.

A list of contact/donation information for these organizations will be posted on the Outreach bulletin board.

The next time you hear "Nothing this year," consider thinking outside the box by helping out one of the aforementioned organizations. Everyone will feel better with the special gift, and you won't need to wrap it!

It's a "Win-Win" all the way around!

Remember those
who are less
fortunate



COOKIES, PIES, and BAKED GOODS. . .
Oh my!!!

Warm up your ovens! Donate your best!

Then come and buy a taste of the rest!



The St. Thomas Bake Sale
is December 4, 2010

from 9 am to 4 pm.

This cookie and bake sale
is a fundraiser for the
Guild of the Christ Child.

Memorial Bricks in the Apostle's Garden

As we approach the time of year when we start planning our holiday activities, many memories come to mind—memories of those no longer with us, the birth of a grandchild or great-grandchild, or thanksgiving for an anniversary or birthday.

What better way to remember these times than to place a memory brick in our beautiful Apostle's Garden?

For \$40, a brick engraved with your own words may be placed in the garden. Fill out a form found on the table in the entrance. Completed forms may be left in the church office or given to **Marge Dellinger**. For more info, call **Marge** at 492-3305.